

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
A-10A/79-0191 & A-10A/80-0225
AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BOARD
NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE, NEVADA
4 December 2002

Approximately 98 nautical miles northwest of Nellis Air Force Base, NV, while performing the tactical portion of an Air Interdiction mission, aircraft A-10A/79-0191 and A-10A/80-0225 collided at an altitude of approximately 5,930 feet above mean sea level and 740 feet above ground level. Mishap Pilot 1 (MP 1) executed a successful ejection and parachuted to safety, sustaining minor injuries. Mishap Pilot 2 (MP 2) initiated ejection, but was fatally injured. Both mishap aircraft were totally destroyed upon impact, resulting in a loss of \$11,503,857.95 and \$11,493,013.45, respectively. The total loss of government property, including associated components, was \$22,996,871.40. Both MA impacted property on the Nevada Test and Training Range.

The AIB found by clear and convincing evidence that MP 2 lost situational awareness during a formation rejoin which resulted in an aircraft midair collision with MP 1. Furthermore, MP 1 initiated a follow-on attack without fully assessing MP 2's rejoin. This action led to MP 1 losing sight of MP 2 and subsequently contributing to the cause of the midair collision.

- The AIB found clear and convincing evidence that MP 2 lost sight of MP 1 and mistakenly rejoined behind Mishap Pilot 4 (MP 4). MP 2 mistook MP 4 for his element leader, MP 1. This directly contributed to the mishap.
- The AIB found clear and convincing evidence that MP 2's extraneous and/or misleading radio calls and acknowledgements directly contributed to the mishap.
- The AIB also found clear and convincing evidence that MP 2 was neither aware of the position nor had sight of MP 1 or Mishap Pilot 3 (MP 3) after he had lost sight of MP 1.

The AIB found clear and convincing evidence that both pilots ejected from their aircraft. Additionally, the AIB found clear and convincing evidence that MP 2's death was caused by blunt force injuries.

Under 10 U.S.C. 2254(d), any opinion of the accident investigators as to the cause of, or the factors contributing to, the accident set forth in the accident investigation report may not be considered as evidence in any civil or criminal proceeding arising from an aircraft accident, nor may such information be considered an admission of liability by the United States or by any person referred to in those conclusions or statements.